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The PASSENGER PIGEON

A Magazine of Wisconsin Bird Study

Published Quarterly By

THE WISCONSIN SOCIETY
FOR ORNITHOLOGY, INC.



SUMMER ISSUE
VOL. XVI, NO. 2

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Summer (April-June) 1954

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1953 In Review . . .

By C. DENNIS BESADNY

The year ended with a record total of 288 different birds being observed by ornithologists in Wisconsin. Of these, there were 285 species, two subspecies (prairie horned lark and Gambel's sparrow), and one hybrid (Brewster's warbler). The efforts of more than 300 ornithologists and the unusual weather conditions during the year were combined to give this noteworthy number of birds recorded.

The State Picture

A few hardy species remained in the state in the early part of the year, especially in southeastern Wisconsin. Temperatures were about normal and snow cover was light. The nights in February were cold enough to hold back any major waterfowl migrations, but several species of ducks were noted on the open water areas in the southern part of the state. An unusual hot spell between March 21 and 28 brought in quite a few migrants. The western and pied-billed grebes and hooded merganser were observed much earlier than usual. Lower than normal temperatures, along with recurrent rain and strong winds were recorded during the first three weeks in April, but the migration pattern ran true to form. Several uncommon species were recorded during this period including the European widgeon, golden plover, willet, and Bewick's wren.

The migration of land birds was quite heavy during the first two weeks in May with many species entering the state during the unseasonal warm spell of May 6-11. Rarities among the shorebird populations included the white-rumped, Baird's, stilt, and western sandpipers. Large warbler flights were recorded on May 3-5 in both Madison and Milwaukee. The state-wide May Day count held on May 17 recorded a grand total of 230 species of birds. This was more than had been seen on May Day counts in the past five years. Among the rarities listed were the American egret, ruddy turnstone, long-billed dowitcher, Hudsonian godwit, worm-eating and hooded warblers, yellow-breasted chat, and lark sparrow. The month of June was warmer than usual and by the end of the first week only a handful of stragglers remained. Most of the northern and western parts of Wisconsin were slightly cooler than normal, with the southeastern part being somewhat warmer during July. Thundersqualls on July 20-21 and 25-26 brought in the first fall shorebird migrants to central Wisconsin. The summer months produced many good nesting records.

More migrants began to straggle in during August, but no major flights were reported. The shorebird migration was moderate with the bulk of the birds gone by the end of August. However, good numbers of individuals were seen throughout October. There was little evidence of land bird migration until late August, and then only a few stragglers

appeared. August was very hot and near drought conditions existed in some parts of the state. The land bird migration increased considerably in early September and large flights were observed in northern Wisconsin on September 4. The big push came September 12 and lasted through the 18th. The large warbler flights were first noticed in Milwaukee the last week in September. Many individuals were observed well into October. The unseasonal warm, dry fall weather delayed arrival and departure dates and also brought in several uncommon visitors including the little blue heron, king eider, American scoter, glaucous and Iceland gulls, Bewick's and Carolina wrens, and Bell's vireo. A late dickcissel was observed near Mazomanie, September 28, and a yellow-breasted chat was seen near Two Rivers on October 10.



THE DICKCISSEL REMAINED VERY LATE IN WISCONSIN IN 1953.

PHOTO BY GEORGE PRINS

Mild weather prevailed well into November and precipitation was still way below normal. Large numbers of migrants were still moving through the state. A good snow cover was found only in the extreme northern part of Wisconsin. This mild weather brought a large number of observers into the field for the annual Christmas bird census and a record-breaking list of 116 species was recorded in 44 separate counts between December 24, 1953, and January 3, 1954. Many southern birds remaining in the state had a fairly easy time because of a lack of snow. It was also a good winter for most of the northern birds although few crossbills, pine grosbeaks, and siskins were seen. Outstanding winter observations were snowy owls recorded for several places in Wisconsin, the Carolina wrens in Adams, Dane, and Sauk Counties, and the Harris's

sparrow seen in Green County. Several migrant species were known to be spending the winter in the state.

The Unusual Records

Each year a number of rarities appear in Wisconsin; some are seen nearly every year, others are seen only once or twice over a long period of time. The number of rarities seen in any one year reflect the alertness of observers in the field for these rare visitors can easily pass through the state unnoticed. Only the more outstanding records are included here.

EARED GREBE: Noted on Lake Mendota, Madison, Nov. 1 (Peter Weber—Charlie Sontag—Tom Soulen); and in the same area, Dec. 19 (Mrs. R. A. Walker). Latest date on record.

WESTERN GREBE: Seen in the Milwaukee area, Mar. 15 (the C. P. Fristers); again in the Milwaukee area, Nov. 11 (Mary Donald).

WHITE PELICAN: One was seen on Lake Koshkonong on June 22 (Mary Donald).

LITTLE BLUE HERON: Three seen at the Beaver Dam Marsh, Waukesha County, Aug. 13 (Mrs. F. L. Larkin); near Cedarburg on Aug. 16 (Mrs. Gimmler—Mrs. Larkin).

EUROPEAN WIDGEON: In Columbia County, Apr. 5 (Howard Winkler); Winnebago County, Apr. 19-22 (Evans, Wellso et al.).

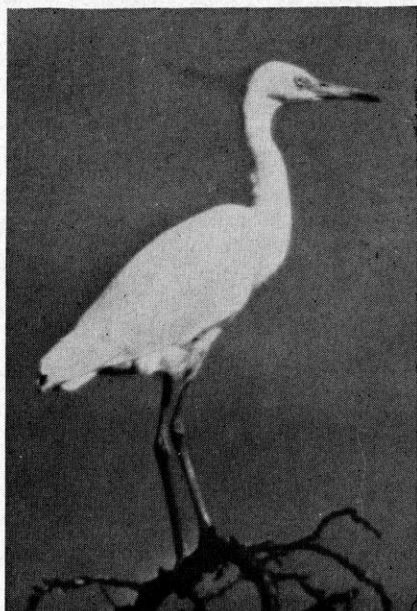
KING EIDER: Four were carefully observed on Lake Michigan in southern Ozaukee County on Sept. 21 (Mrs. F. L. Larkin—Dick Gordon—Sam Robbins); seen again on Sept. 30 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom—Mary Donald).

AMERICAN SCOTER: One seen at Cedar Grove, Oct. 10 (Gordon Orians); six seen in same area, Nov. 1 (Gordon Orians); three still present there, Nov. 8 (Fred Alyea—Peter Weber—Tom Soulen).

GOLDEN EAGLE: One watched at Tower Hill State Park, Iowa County, Dec. 12 (Jack Kaspar—Gordon Orians—Tom Soulen).

STILT SANDPIPER: This species is being recorded in fall with increasingly regularity—this year being found in four areas. Even more outstanding were these spring dates: Milwaukee, May 5 (Mrs. Larkin—Dr. Collentine); Columbia County, May 10-22 (Foster—Ragatz—Hoogerheide—Skaar—the Roarks).

BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER: Present in Madison, Aug. 29-Sept. 3 (Mrs. R. A. Walker—Alan Keitt).



THE LITTLE BLUE HERON
RETURNED TO THE STATE.

PHOTO BY EDWARD PRINS

MARbled GODWIT: First seen in Madison, May 1 (James B. Hale); noted in Ozaukee County, June 7 (Mary Donald—Lisa Decker) and June 11 (Tom Soulen); seen near Watertown, Jefferson County, Aug. 19 (Mary Donald—Karl Priebe).

HUDSONIAN GODWIT: One in Dane County on May 12 (Mrs. R. A. Walker—P. D. Skaar); one to three noted at Goose Pond in Columbia County, May 17-24 (Howard Winkler et al.).

ICELAND GULL: One in first winter plumage studied at Kenosha, Jan. 2 (Dick Gordon); one in Milwaukee, Aug. 28 (Mrs. F. L. Larkin). Although there is no Wisconsin specimen, this species has been seen so frequently in northern Illinois, and these observations—along with a couple of other recent sight observations of this species in the Kenosha area—were so carefully made, that we feel these records are authentic.

LAUGHING GULL: A bird carefully observed in Adams County, July 26 (Sam Robbins).

BEWICK'S WREN: Adults and four young seen in Adams County, Aug. 5-11 with departure of this species on Sept. 22 (Sam Robbins). Seen in Winnebago County, May 3 (Beck and Wellso).

WORM-EATING WARBLER: Seen in Lafayette County, May 2 (Lola Welch—Ethel Olson); on the May Day count in Rock County, May 17 (Harold Liebherr et al.).

BREWSTER'S WARBLER: Two reliable records of this hybrid: Manitowoc County, May 10 (Frank King); Adams County, July 24 (Sam Robbins).

PRAIRIE WARBLER: Seen at Wisconsin Rapids, June 1 (Sam Robbins).

YELLOW-BREASTED CHAT: One positively identified at Two Rivers feeding on Virginia Creeper berries, Oct. 10 (Winnifred Smith Mayer)—latest date on record.

HOODED WARBLER: A female in Winnebago County, May 10 (Wellso et al.); present in the Appleton area, May 27 (Mrs. W. E. Rogers—Mrs. H. L. Playman).

HARRIS'S SPARROW: In addition is many migration reports, there is this outstanding winter record: Green County, Dec. 31 (Howard Orians et al.).

GAMBEL'S SPARROW: This western visitor was clearly identified at a bird bath in the Oshkosh area, May 6 (Mrs. Glen Fisher).

The Hypothetical List

This list comprises those rare species which are observed in the state, but about which there is still some element of doubt. Rare bird observations must be accompanied by detailed notes on description, behavior, song, etc. in order for the observation to be properly evaluated. In order to maintain all possible scientific accuracy these skeptical observations are omitted from the field note summaries and are put on the hypothetical list. These records are kept on file and are available for future reference.

CINNAMON TEAL: Three teal thought to be of this species, were shot on Lake Poygan, Oct. 22, (fide Al Bradford), but the carcasses were disposed of before they could be critically examined.

conditions did not permit detailed study of the birds in question, it seems best to consider them hypothetical.

SMITH'S LONGSPUR: This species was thought to have been identified in Brown County on Nov. 18 (Edwin Cleary). Wisconsin has had no positive record of this species since 1921, and no fall records for a considerable time before that. Because this is such a difficult identification to make in fall, the evidence at hand does not seem sufficient to establish this as a perfectly valid record.

CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR: Because some longspur observations during the past few springs have led to suspicions of species other than the Lapland being present occasionally, Wisconsin observers have been studying longspurs more closely. A bird of this species was reported from Columbia County on May 24 (Mary Donald)—a very late date for longspurs. Until further evidence—in the form of specimens, photographs or thoroughly documented sight observations—is available, we hesitate to include this species on the list of authentic records.

The State Coverage

Although several counties drew a blank this year, most other counties showed a substantial increase in the number of species of birds observed. The intensive coverage in many counties, plus the large number of observers in the field accounted for the record-breaking total for the year's bird list. If this intensive coverage could be extended to every county in the state, we could have a very detailed picture of birdlife in Wisconsin.

The following counties reported 100 or more species during* 1953:

Adams	228	Manitowoc	175
Bayfield	118	Marathon	108
Brown	200	Milwaukee	246
Burnett	111	Ozaukee	179
Chippewa	176	Outagamie	195
Columbia	213	Polk	100
Dane	244	Rock	193
Dodge	115	Shawano	109
Fond du Lac	149	Sheboygan	135
Jefferson	179	Vernon	176
Kenosha	180	Vilas	124
LaCrosse	141	Waukesha	142
Lafayette	179	Winnebago	216
Lincoln	115		

It is gratifying to know that each year the number of bird enthusiasts increases. Bird-watching is not only a profession, but it is also a most relaxing and rewarding hobby. It is up to those individuals already well acquainted with bird-life to teach others the enjoyment of this hobby. The observations of all bird-watchers, no matter how sketchy or incomplete, greatly help us in the understanding of our bird life. We are looking forward to more contributions, not only from our "regulars," but from new observers as well.

2644 Milwaukee Street
Madison 4, Wisconsin

A STUDY OF ROAD KILLS

By A. W. SCHORGER

Having occasion to make approximately weekly trips between Madison, Wisconsin, and Freeport, Illinois, for a number of years, a record was kept of all of the birds found dead on the road. The distance between these cities is 70 miles, of which 13 are in Illinois. The period during which observations were made ran from June 8, 1932, through March 27, 1950, a span of 18 consecutive years. In all 693 trips were made, an average of 38.5 per year.

A total of 64 species of birds, some of which would not be expected to be killed by automobiles, was found. The red-tailed hawk and crows were killed where there was a cut in the road or a curve. Most of the crows were killed in winter when they were feeding on rabbits. On occasions I have narrowly missed hitting one. The shorebirds were found where the road ran through marshy land. The lesser scaup was picked up on the bridge that crosses the Pecatonica River when entering Freeport. It had evidently followed the river, rose to clear the bridge, and was struck by a car.

Chimney swifts have a habit of hawking over the concrete roads when there is a sharp drop in temperature. My journal entry for May 29, 1947, reads: "Temperature dropped to 34° last night. Cold until about noon when it warmed somewhat. I crossed the bridge over the Pecatonica on my way home at 3:15. There was a strong, cold wind blowing from the west. The embankment beyond the bridge is sheltered by trees and shrubs, and about 20 chimney swifts were feeding over the concrete road, flying as low as two feet above it. Some of the birds swooped down to it at right angles and others flew over it lengthwise. Presumably there were more insects here than elsewhere due to shelter from the wind. There were five dead swifts in the road, struck by cars, within a distance of 500 feet. All appeared to have been killed within an hour. None was there this morning."

Species	No. Killed	Species	No. Killed
Pied-billed Grebe	6	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	7
Lesser Scaup Duck	1	Black-billed Cuckoo	9
Red-tailed Hawk	1	Screech Owl	235
Bob-white	31	Short-eared Owl	2
Chukar Partridge	2	Whip-poor-will	1
Ring-necked Pheasant	271	Nighthawk	8
Virginia Rail	3	Chimney Swift	9
Sora	9	Belted Kingfisher	2
American Coot	1	Flicker	230
Killdeer	3	Red-headed Woodpecker ..	389
Wilson's Snipe	3	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker ..	2
Upland Plover	4	Hairy Woodpecker	1
Pectoral Sandpiper	1	Downy Woodpecker	5
Mourning Dove	61	Eastern Kingbird	28
Pigeon	2	Alder Flycatcher	1

Species	No. Killed	Species	No. Killed
Wood Pewee	1	Bobolink	5
Prairie Horned Lark	9	Eastern Meadowlark	37
Tree Swallow	2	Western Meadowlark	45
Barn Swallow	31	Red-wing	53
Purple Martin	8	Baltimore Oriole	11
Blue Jay	17	Bronzed Grackle	91
Crow	11	Cardinal	1
House Wren	2	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1
Catbird	43	Indigo Bunting	2
Brown Thrasher	59	Dickcissel	1
Robin	310	Goldfinch	22
Wood Thrush	1	Vesper Sparrow	5
Bluebird	10	Slate-colored Junco	1
Cedar Waxwing	1	Tree Sparrow	1
Migrant Shrike	11	Fox Sparrow	1
Starling	31	Song Sparrow	2
Warbling Vireo	1		
English Sparrow	2,784	Total	4,939

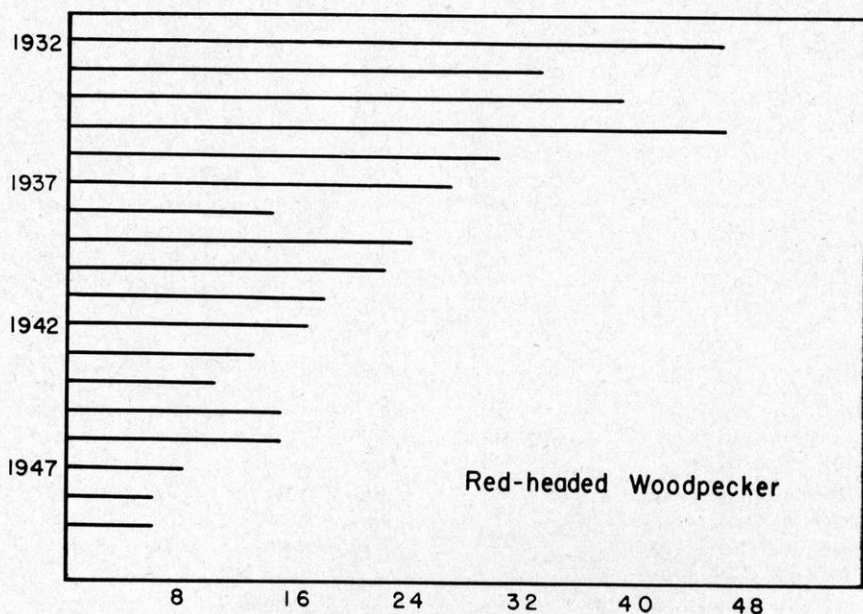


FIGURE 1

It cannot be said that the data on road kills are indices of population trends except in one species, the red-headed woodpecker. Figure 1 shows clearly that there has been a steady and marked decline in the

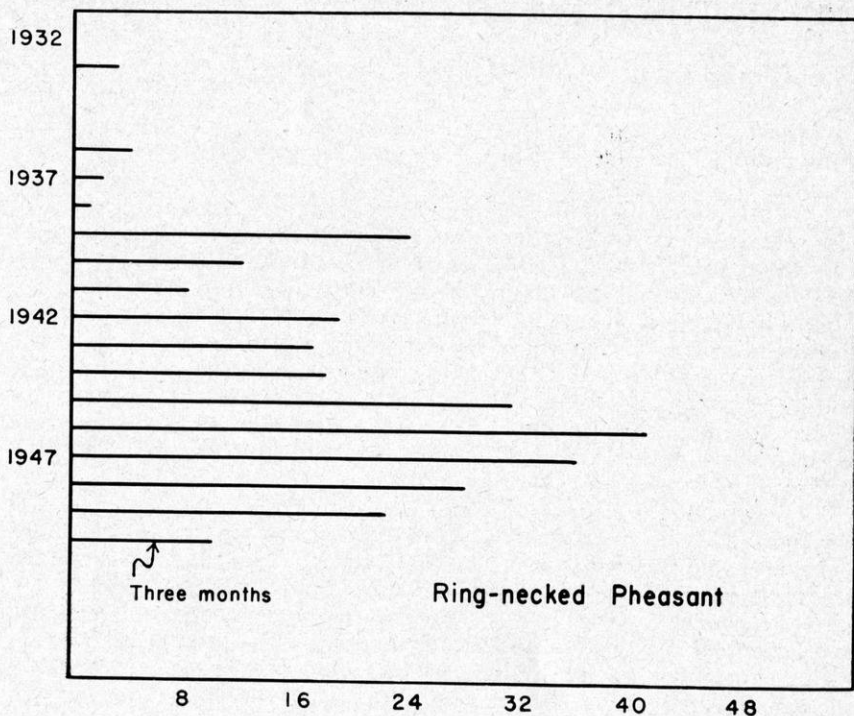


FIGURE 2

population of this woodpecker. The trend is supported by the numbers of live birds seen. The kills of the ring-necked pheasant (Fig. 2), on the other hand, show an increase when this species was approaching a low in the population. The data compiled from the reports of hunters by the Wisconsin Conservation Department show that a high in the state population was reached in 1942, and a low in 1947. Most of the road kills were in Green County which is one of the best pheasant counties in the state. An examination of the hunters' kills showed that this county followed the state curve closely except that the low for Dane and Green Counties occurred in 1948 instead of 1947. It is possible that the high road kills, from 1945 to 1948, were due to an increase in the volume and speed of traffic following the end of World War II.

Dept. of Wildlife Management
University of Wisconsin

NEWS . . .

President Hickey has appointed a Conservation Committee for this year, made up of Jerry Vogelsang (chairman), Mrs. Dorothy Frister and Bernard Kaiman—all of Milwaukee.

If there is sufficient demand for an up-to-date W. S. O. membership list, such a list will be mimeographed and made available to those who wish copies. If you wish to have a copy, please say so on a post card to the W. S. O. secretary in the near future.

(more news on page 58)

THE NESTING HABITS OF OUR CARDINALS

By MRS. HENRY KOENIG

The cardinals that come to our feeding stations are a part of our family, and when I meet friends I am usually greeted with, "How are the birds?"

We have seen many interesting and touching sights during the past four years such as: the cardinal parents in the window-sill feeder with their three young birds, feeding them hurriedly lest darkness overtake them; cardinals, their crowns white with frost, arriving at the feeder on a January morning when the mercury stood at 38 degrees below zero; a January visitor with an injured breast; a weary cardinal sleeping in the feeder from 2:15 until 6:15 P. M. of an April day. By the end of the month this cardinal, looking very strange, had lost ever single tail-feather. We have witnessed the raising of 23 young cardinals in 13 families during the past four summers. We feel reasonably certain that one male fathered all the young but he may not have had the same mate every year.

A survey of the history of a pair of cardinals observed during 1953 may perhaps (with variations) give an idea of the way of all cardinals in this area. This pair however, had five different families and succeeded in rearing eight young, five males and three females.

On January 14 the cardinals began to sing, "weeperty, weeperty, cheer, cheer" and went into the feeder together. All through the mating and nesting season the male was very attentive to his mate; they dined together and he even fed her at times. But after the young were grown he followed the usual pattern, monopolized the feeders and let his mate wait in the shrubbery until he had satisfied his hunger. She went into the feeder after her lord had departed but if he returned she immediately left him in full possession.

In early March the male cardinal seemed tired when he came to the feeder, and he sometimes fluffed up like a ball with his head under one wing and took a nap.

The First Nesting Fails

By the latter part of April the cardinals were nesting. We discovered this because when they left the feeder they made a bee-line for a place northwest of our house. Then in May, two young cardinals were thrown to the ground when a child shook the small evergreen tree in which the nest had been made.

The cardinals' second nesting was in an arbor vitae hedge which skirted the sidewalk of a busy street. By June 10 both parents were in the yard and we knew the young were out of the nest and nearby. Several days later a young cardinal was seen near the house and soon thereafter an immature, grayish bird with finely streaked breast appeared in the feeder. When we saw the father cardinal feed this bird and one of his own, we realized that the cardinal had hatched a cowbird. After the father had fed his son solicitously for a time he began the usual procedure of chasing the young bird away.



CARDINALS COME TO FEEDERS
WINTER AND SUMMER

PHOTO BY I. S. BUSS

A few words more about this family of cardinals. After the birds had left their nest in the arbor vitae hedge, I was given permission to get the nest and found in it a pierced cardinal egg. Perhaps this was the first one laid and when the cowbird came to lay her egg she pierced the one already there; then the cardinal may have laid another egg, making a total of three eggs in the nest.

In early July we learned that our cardinals were nesting a third time and their choice for a home was the Dutchman's Pipe vine above the clothes line and a few feet from the kitchen door of a family with four children. The nest was not noticed until July 3, and the birds were already out of it six days later. Two young male cardinals reared in this nest came to our feeders for food and to the pool to bathe.

Now we come to the fourth family of cardinals, and we surely thought it would be the last for that year. It was on the morning of August 5 that the screeching of the father cardinal called our attention to a squirrel lying on the lowest branch of our huge pine tree. We chased it away while the pair of cardinals flew wildly about; then near the end of the branch we saw their nest, to which the mother soon returned.

A Duplex Apartment

Next came the biggest surprise of all. Something dropped from the pine and examination proved it to be a baby cardinal. From our collection of nests we took the one in which the cowbird had been hatched, tied it to a branch about four feet from the original nest and put the baby cardinal into it, hoping the parents would care for the little one. After a while the mother did come to feed it and later the father took over the feeding. We wished that he would also keep that baby warm during the cold night, for the mother had the other nest to sit on. But father cardinals do not extend their responsibilities to sitting on the nest. Sometime during the following morning the parents chipped excitedly and flew all over the huge pine, but we could find nothing wrong. In the afternoon there was no movement in the nest and upon investigating we found both nests empty! We could hardly believe that those tiny birds had been ready to leave the nest. Of course we had never before seen a cardinal on the day it left the nest. They were in the apple tree several feet from the pine where I hoped they wouldn't be struck by the falling fruit.

The two succeeding mornings I arose at 4:30 to guard the two young birds from a neighbor's cat. Later, as I stood near the apple tree, the cardinals sang a duet of "cheer. cheer," she in one tree and he in another. The young birds at this time were about the size of a chickadee.

For ten days after they left the nest, both parents continued to feed their little ones. Then we noticed the absence of the mother who came to eat only just before dark. The thought of a possible fifth family crossed my mind, but this seemed improbable. During these days the father was very busy feeding his young birds—both females. One morning he fed them muskmelon seeds and doughnut crumbs for breakfast as they sat side by side in the lilac bush. In the feeder he hulled the seeds, picked them up, took a drink to moisten them, and away he flew.

At this time it was interesting to hear the father sing short phrases and very often just a note or two. The cardinals explored the neighborhood together but returned every evening. The father chipped furiously as the young birds settled down for the night; then he usually came to the feeder for a peaceful snack before going to roost. By September the father no longer fed his fourth family and was gone most of the time. It was then that the two young birds went into the feeders alone. One ate of the suet cake for fifteen minutes after which its bill was coated with little pieces of suet. Next it tried the sunflower seeds which were too hard to crack, but the hemp seeds were easily eaten. Last of all this precious little bird ate some doughnut crumbs which clung to its bill until the bird's appearance reminded one of a child as it looks after having eaten, with bits of food all around the mouth. The bird wiped and wiped its bill on the perching rail but a small piece of suet remained there.

Finally we were sure that the cardinals were nesting a fifth time, for when the mother finished feeding, she always flew off toward the northwest. In early September the cardinal parents came to the feeders constantly to carry food to their fifth family—now out of the nest. Five days later the father came with one of his new offspring which he fed. During the first part of October the cardinals came often to the feeders with their three young birds. The father regularly fed two males while the mother fed a young female. The five families of the past summer were usually hatched about a month apart, and in each case the father bird chased the young away as soon as they were able to care for themselves. We are now looking forward to the cardinal families of 1954.

215 Jackson Street

Sauk City, Wisconsin

MORE NEWS . . .

Another field trip to watch the hawks at Cedar Grove is planned for Sunday, September 26. 55 persons were thrilled with a similar trip last year. Not only do we see hawks migrating, but also many other birds passing through as well; and it is a treat to see the hawk banding station in operation. Plan now to attend.

This issue carries the annual pre-Christmas listing of outstanding buys from the W. S. O. Supply Department. You can choose many nice gifts now and avoid much of the rushing and worrying that usually come in December.

When considering gifts, think also of

the products offered by our advertisers. These products are fine for you, and fine for your friends. Now is a good time to order, and when ordering, always be sure to mention seeing the advertisements in **The Passenger Pigeon**.

One Christmas bird count (making a state total of 45) was received too late for publication in the last issue. It was taken at Mishicot in Manitowoc County on January 2, 1954, by John Kraupa, Bernard Brouchoud and Clyde Rau. Among the 19 species recorded were 23 mourning doves, one belted kingfisher, one red-headed woodpecker, and two song sparrows—all wintering north of their usual range.

(more news on page 73)

AN UNPLANNED NATURE DRAMA

By ELIZABETH A. OEHLENSCHLAEGER

For many years an abandoned small farm had lain useless and unoccupied, excepting by burrs, quackgrass and two trees—a decaying American birch and a sturdy shaggy bark hickory. The birch was the home of a chipmunk family, but the hickory tree had resisted any such invasions into its heart.

Like all abandoned farms, this one had empty tumbledown buildings—a chicken coop, deep in droppings, rotting straw and what once had been nesting places for the long-ago deceased hens; and an empty little cottage with broken windows, and a door hanging on rusting hinges. You could peer through the windows and see what had evidently been the living room papered with bright green trees, in which canary birds were holding forth with wide-open mandibles! That paper held a prophetic note!

The road leading toward all this forlorn and lonely piece of land consisted of two deep muddy ruts—too muddy to allow any kind of vehicle to enter; so you descended and walked the distance from what had been the gate, to what had been the heart of the farm—the little house.

Oh yes, the landscape held a bit of decoration, two lilac bushes—those democratic shrubs which are content to grow anywhere just to be near human beings! But when all this loneliness was passed, you came upon a breathtaking expanse of beauty. Below you, looking from the hillside, lay the blue waters of Lake Michigan sparkling in a late autumn sun. There was a bay in the distance, with a lighthouse, where a fishing village lay. Nowhere could the western world have a spot of greater beauty and dignity than this piece of land on the western shore of Lake Michigan.

And so three people decided that this farm should be the place where they, and one small child, would make a home, and a bird sanctuary.

There were years of work, and planning for more work, but most of all immediate planting of trees and shrubs which would invite bird life. To be sure, meadowlarks had found sanctuary in those abandoned fields, and pheasants had raised their young, but no bright plumaged songsters could find where to build their nests. So men, guided by a mother's vision of the future for her small son, had planted hundreds of shrubs which would bear fruit for the cedar waxwings, and spruce, pine, elms and maples for the tree nesting members of the feathered tribes!

The years of fallowness had given the land a wonderful fertility in spite of burrs and quackgrass; so the landscaping thrived luxuriously. Years have a habit of being fleeting when hands and minds are usefully occupied.

The resulting home and gardens had a touch of modified Spanish which fitted into the landscape. A sunken garden with a pool and fountain, hedges of privet and evergreens—homes for song sparrows and warblers—stone walls for bright colored pots with cactus and agave plants. The acres which had been so desolate and forlorn brought beauty and

warmth and friendliness to many visitors, and complete protection to any and all birds looking for undisturbed locations in which to carry on their parental duties.

In time the "Hummock" became a bird sanctuary where the abandoned, injured, or unwanted birds were welcomed—principally those birds which had few friends—the hawks and owls. Out of this latter protection, and the growth of the cacti on the stone walls, developed a little drama which none of us will forget.

Cacti—those spiny and many-shaped citizens of the American desert—have a habit of growing into unusual sizes when properly cared for, even in Wisconsin's changeable climate. And as the plants grew in size, the collection did likewise. The day bloomers displayed their glory on the stone walls; the more delicate night bloomers were housed in a small conservatory near the residence. The high winds which sometimes prevail in this part of the country make a heavy succulent night blooming *Epyphyllum* a "house plant"—a plant to be cared for intensively and under cover. Finally this care was rewarded. An occasional night bloomer, the "Queen of the Night" would have a single blossom, indication of glories to come.

Always when these buds came to maturity there were guests, sometimes a few, sometimes so many that the little conservatory was crowded. The illumination was given by two ship's lanterns and two old brass candlesticks brought from Benares, India—cobras with spread hoods.

Then, one night, the "Queen of the Night" decided to hold a truly royal court—thirty-one great buds were ready to open; and as usual many guests were invited and had accepted the invitation.

It was a hot, humid night in August, without a breath of wind. The low horizon was illuminated with silent lightening; a gray haze lay over the lake and over the sunken garden and its pool, where night blooming lotus were also open. It was a perfect setting for one of nature's dramas to play upon the human heart and mind. Added to this was a pet great horned owl, which was the companion of the woman who saved it from destruction. The fierce ruler of the night had become a lovable companion whose talons or mandibles were never used to hurt when a bare hand—or head—was made a perch for the bird. And as was her custom she flew back and forth as guests were escorted to the little conservatory which she never entered, but sat on the glass roof, waiting to fly back to the house to help conduct another group of guests.

As the great flowers opened, their overpowering fragrance spread over the entire place—a fitting reception for the visitors, among whom was a woman of most sophisticated taste and superior mental attitude. She also shattered every idealistic tendency expressed in her presence with devastating sophistries. She was feared by many, and loved by few. She carried all her undesirable qualities with her into the little conservatory.

A flashlight is always ready to illuminate the flowers for close inspection, and an almost religious silence reigned that night. People spoke in low voices, or not at all; just watched those flowers, made of light and swans' "down." There never was heard a flippant remark on the evenings when these flowers opened, but many things were said that

gave an insight into the best and finest part of human thought—thoughts hidden, that could do so much to make a better world when expressed!

The sophisticated lady said very little in her sharp high pitched voice when she confronted the flowers with a slight look of amazement, when some one asked: "Have you ever had seeds from these blossoms?"

"No" was the answer. "We have no insects which are large enough or have a long enough proboscis to penetrate the deep funnel of the flower."

As if in answer to the question, a great five-spotted hawk moth flew through the open door and hummed her way from blossom to blossom. The silence was absolute, as everybody watched the great insect, which flew out of the open door just as suddenly as it had entered.

"How can any one see this and not believe in God?" said a man's voice. Still silence, excepting for a slight scratching on the glass roof of the conservatory where the two great yellow eyes of the owl looked down at the scene. Suddenly a wild scream sounded out, and a high-pitched hysterical voice cracked the silence. "Take me out of here, take me out of here. I can't stand it another moment; I'll go mad!" The sophisticated lady's armor had been pierced by a question, and a drama staged by nature. She was quickly escorted out by her husband and one of the other men who happened to be a physician.

It was nearing midnight. Sheet lightening was still on the horizon, and the heavy humid air still hung over the sunken garden with its nightblooming lotus.

"Let's go through the sunken garden and see the lotus" some one suggested. Arriving at the pool the ship's lantern which was carried to light the way, threw a small circle of light into the pool. Beside the gleaming flat leaves lay a wide open pale pink lotus, and the tightly closed cup of a daybloomer. Again silence. Then a woman's voice began softly the deathless Heine—Mendelssohn song "Die Lotusblume angesticht, sic vor der Sonne Pracht." Six voices blended and were joined by another group going to the house. The song had swelled into a chorus by the time everybody arrived at the house, where deft and trained fingers had begun to play the accompaniment as the song swelled on the terraces adjoining the music room. When it ceased there were quiet farewells—and each guest carried with him, or her, the impressions left of a drama staged by the cohesive but unplanned circumstances of nature.

There was an aftermath. Some days later an unexpected visitor was announced. It was the sophisticated lady.

"I should like to apologize and explain," she said. Her story had all the feeling of a penitent in a confessional. "You know, I never believed in a God, but when the man's voice asked a question which was also a confession of faith, and I realized how all things in nature work both for beauty and use—it just crushed me. But I think I shall be happier for the realization that there is—a God!"

And she left, very quietly.

1157 Kavanaugh Place
Milwaukee 13, Wisconsin

Save The Prairie Chicken!

By JERRY VOGELSANG, Chairman

W. S. O. Conservation Committee

"The prairie chicken in Wisconsin is a doomed species. It will pass from the hunting picture in a few decades at most, and may become extinct in the state after 1967." This comes from the pen of Wallace Grange in his book, **Wisconsin Grouse Problems**. However, Grange felt that there was a ray of hope in saving the prairie chickens from extinction, if immediate steps are taken.

The Central Wisconsin sand plain is the best remaining chicken range in the midwest. The area is a composite of grassland, marsh, and second growth woodland. On this area, today, is to be found what is perhaps the highest density of prairie chickens in the world, where many of us have sat in a blind on a frosty April morning in dawn's half light and heard the ghostly boom of the prairie chicken. Our spines tingled.

Why is the prairie chicken a doomed species?

Prairie chickens cannot survive without grasslands. The inroads of new agricultural attempts in this area are threatening the prairie chicken's existence. There are approximately 38,000 acres of prairie chicken range on the Leola and Buena Vista marshes and grasslands of the Plain-field area. The Hamerstoms told me that from 1951 to 1953 five thousand acres of this range were lost due to extensive grazing, plowing, and to a small extent weed and brush invasion. This is a loss of 13% of range in two years. At this rate, the chickens of Wisconsin have about fifteen years to go.

What can be done?

Grange wrote in **Wisconsin Grouse Problems**, "Chickens show ability to survive as isolated, detached and small colonies." At the last W. S. O. convention in Madison, the Hamerstoms came forward with a possible solution. They believe that if scattered forty- and eighty-acre plots of nesting habitat are set aside, these scattered areas can and will hold a nucleus prairie chicken population that will be capable of repopulating adjacent areas as they become available. The idea was called a "checker-board plan."

As members of W. S. O. we can do a great deal to perpetuate the existence of the prairie chicken in Wisconsin.

How?

The W. S. O. in its resolution at the convention decided to purchase one of these forty- or eighty-acre areas to help start the checker-board plan. A statement of the resolution appeared in the last issue of **The Passenger Pigeon** (page 43).

The Conservation Commission has shown a great deal of interest in the prairie chickens, but will take no action to purchase prairie chicken lands unless sufficient public interest is shown. One organization, The Wisconsin Conservation League, has already set the pace with a purchase of forty acres of land for the nesting of prairie chickens;

other groups are thinking of doing the same. With our purchase, we will demonstrate to the Conservation Commission further public concern for this problem. The Conservation Commission will inevitably recognize this deep interest by the people of the state and will be prompted to action.

Land values in the Plainfield Marsh areas average about \$30.00 an acre. The plan to purchase a tract of land in this area involves forty to eighty acres. At present the Society's funds are insufficient for such a purchase. Therefore, as authorized by the resolution, money will be raised by contributions. We plan a fund-raising campaign soon. Here is our chance as ornithologists and conservationists to do something—the chance to transmute our philosophy into action. Nature lovers have been justifiably criticized by sportsmen for saying too much and doing too little. However, this is our opportunity for concrete action.

The Plainfield farmers are not waiting. Their plows are biting into the grasslands, now. In the distance we can hear a booming prairie chicken. Stop! Listen! The booming is growing faint, it may soon be gone.

3218 West Highland Boulevard
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Outdoor Calendar . . .

JAMES H. ZIMMERMAN

Metronome of the Woods

At 8:15 P M. on July 22, 1954, not far from the still-warm pavement of King Street near the Capitol Square, a tiny, pale green animal clinging to the underside of a tree leaf twitched his long antennae, raised his transparent wings high over his back, and tried them out for sound. Judging from the reaction of passersby on the sidewalk, the rapid, high-pitched, penetrating cadence of Madison's first tree cricket fell on deaf ears. Had these persons not been preoccupied with other thoughts, and had they been enthusiastic members of the Madison Audubon Society, probably they still would not have heard this insect, even though most of them were physically able to hear it. It is true that it may have been near enough to the limit of human perception to be inaudible to some ears, as are the piercing squeaks of flying squirrels or the thin songs and calls of warblers, kinglets, waxwings, hummingbirds and some katydids. But good hearing and an interest in nature are not enough; there is a third prerequisite for perception which all too often is overlooked. Just as the clinching field marks of even a sitting bird are invisible to one who knows not what to look for, so there are many calls which remain part of the inaudible background of sound until one has a mental picture of what to listen for. Unfortunately, sounds often are difficult to describe to another person; but they are at least far easier to recreate in the mind and to convey by words to others than are such sensations as odors or

flavors. And an interest in sounds born of insatiable curiosity can cause the mind unconsciously to become immediately uneasy at each new sound, until attention is fixed on it and its cause determined. A mind so trained will soon enlarge its awareness of nature tremendously, and it will put everyone else to shame during a May-day count. Now is a good time to take inventory of the animal sounds around us.

Mammals rate very poorly; aside from a half dozen squirrels and chipmunks, the vociferousness of our familiar mammals outside of deep wilderness is at a pitch nearly out of reach of the ear—not only flying squirrels but mice, shrews and bats as well. Birds and amphibians, which provide the largest share of our audible environment, become silent one by one in midsummer. But their songs and calls are now replaced by the chorus from an ever-growing variety of insects, and these insects merit much more attention than they have received. To compile a life list of just the comparatively few audible ones is a fascinating pursuit safely immune from the law of diminishing returns. In many insects, the sound seems to be incidental to other activities—the hum or buzz in flight of bugs, flies, mosquitoes, grasshoppers and June beetles—though it may actually serve as a means of communication in the swarming of honey bees and the huge evening mating flight of midges. And there are the click beetles, which sometimes have to be rescued from a spider to prevent their incessant sharp protests from marring the rest of the night.

But the most pleasing and diverse insect sounds are found among those produced by a special vibrating organ which is, or adjoins, an apparatus for amplification. Except for the stentorian arboreal cicadas, our insects which possess such organs belong to the **Orthoptera**, along with grasshoppers, locusts, cockroaches and the strange walking-sticks. Though this is a relatively small group as insect orders go, there are hundreds of species, some of which are wonderfully specialized forms. This order is a very ancient one; its fossil members indicate that orthopterans were—as far as we know—the first musicians on earth, in the dim forests of the late Palaeozoic, far back in geologic time. Our present musicians are found in two large families. One comprises the katydids, or long-horned grasshoppers—large, usually green, diurnal or nocturnal or both, arboreal or ground-dwelling, and producers in vast variety of faint rustles, piercing “zees,” slow rasps, rapid ticks, and even deafening whines. The crickets make up the second family, of whose eight subfamilies Wisconsin has audible representatives in at least four. In contrast to the numerous stout, dark, ground-dwelling field crickets that chirp or trill loudly in the grass, the tree crickets include but a few species—mostly in the genus **Oecanthus**—of delicate, pale-colored insects, in general size and shape not unlike green lace-wings (whose wings, however, differ in sloping down like the two sides of a roof when at rest). Of the five species of tree—or better, bush—crickets reported in the Wisconsin area,* four produce either continuous trills, or occasional short trills at irregular intervals, which are easily lost among the other night sounds. It is only one, **Oecanthus niveus**, a species ranging widely over eastern North America, whose indefatigable and seldom faltering cadence rings throughout

*Blatchley, Willis S. 1920. The Orthoptera of Northeastern America (especially Indiana and Florida). 784 pp.

every night from late July into late October: a rapid **brrrt . . . brrrt . . . brrrt . . . brrrt . . .** (or, on warm nights, perhaps better described by repeating the word **treat . . .**). So distinctive among the sounds of nature is a lively chorus of several of these musical metronomes beating in unison that it is doubtless familiar to many who have not seen the insects themselves.

Like many creatures invisible by day, this tree cricket will reward a night search. Though the singing males are solitary and widely spaced—very much like songbirds holding and proclaiming territories—their calls can be heard 200 feet away, and the problem is usually not where to find a tree cricket but rather which one to concentrate on. Where shrubs, small trees or tangled vines are abundant, as many as ten performers may be found in an area 100 feet square. Usually the insects manage to synchronize their chirps so well that when several are equally far away, the rhythmic sound at first seems to come from nowhere in particular.



OECANTHUS NIVEUS. MALE AT REST ON MULBERRY LEAF, AUGUST 6, 1954.
LENGTH, EXCLUDING ANTENNAE, ABOUT 3/4 INCH. (TWO LEGS MISSING.)

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

Though a disturbance will interrupt the performance of the insect nearest at hand, it will remain silent for only a few minutes. And it will continue, even in the full beam of a flashlight, to hold its two rounded tegmina in the curious vertical position while vibrating them transversely. Though the singer may be only two feet from the ground, more often it is just out of reach, 8 or 10 feet high, where its obliging preference for the lower side of a leaf makes it plainly visible from below. By day it remains so stiffly quiet that it is possible to turn over a leaf and obtain, in full sunlight, a photograph like the accompanying one before the insect comes to life and leaps about. The female appears to be much narrower because the tegmina (flightless fore-wings or wing-covers) are no wider than the slender body; and she can make no sound. The shorter hind wings seem to be little used; at any rate tree crickets can move about well enough by jumping and climbing alone.

Females are attracted, perhaps by the nocturnal song, and certainly by the secretion of a glandular hollow on the male's thorax which is

exposed when the tegmina are raised to the vibrating position. It was once thought that this tree cricket was responsible for the death of young shoots of raspberries and grapes when rows of eggs were inserted into the pith; but now it is known that this damage is done by two subspecies of the striped tree cricket, *O. nigricornis*, which inhabits herbs in fence-rows and fields. In late summer, *O. niveus* laboriously seals her eggs singly into small, harmless cavities carved into the bark of small branches of elms, apples and other trees and shrubs. So economic entomologists now leave this species alone, or even encourage it, since young tree crickets in May and June, unlike their vegetarian or omnivorous orthopteran cousins, are carnivorous and devour plant lice (aphids) as do the totally unrelated lacewings or "aphis lions" which they resemble slightly when both are in the adult stage.

The tree cricket's voice results when a minute rasp about a millimeter long on a cross vein on the lower surface of the right tegmen, near its base, is rubbed on a tiny thickened ridge on the inner edge of the left. The file on the left tegmen and the ridge on the right are just as well developed, but apparently they remain unused, since the right tegmen overlaps the left even when they are held perpendicularly and spread nearly apart for sound-making. These hard, flat, stiff, glassy tegmina, reinforced by the strong margins and cross veins faintly visible in the photograph, are taut membranes which magnify the tiny vibrations and turn them into the remarkably loud and musical chirps we hear. Because this species stridulates over a wide range of temperature, because it is our only insect that maintains over long periods what is remarkably close to perfect rhythm, and because rapidity of motion in cold-blooded animals depends on external heat, there is a dependable relationship between the temperature and the cadence of the chirps. At 72 degrees Fahrenheit, for instance, one hears about 160 per minute; at 66 degrees, 132; at 60 degrees, 108; and at 57 degrees, only 93. By completing such a table, many have attempted to derive a simple formula by which one may deduce the temperature in the field with the aid of only a pocket watch. Strangely, there are several formulae; perhaps the "temperature cricket" is not uniformly active in all parts of its range, which includes parts of New England, Ontario, Minnesota, Utah, Mexico, Cuba and Georgia.

How much of Wisconsin falls within this range? Cantrall's careful monograph* reports that in southeastern Michigan the insect is found in shrubs in oak-hickory woods but avoids moist areas near swamps. At Madison it is almost universally distributed in town and country; in hedges, shrubs and vines, especially at woodland edges—even those bordering wet marshes. It would be most interesting to hear from members, this summer and fall, where tree crickets are heard in Wisconsin (send in a postcard, please!). A distribution map will be made. We can learn from it what the ecological requirements of the insect are—what kinds of climate and vegetation it is and is not able to thrive in. Except for species harmful to crops, the insects have received little more study in

*Cantrall, Irving J. 1943. The Ecology of the Orthoptera and Dermaptera of the George Reserve, Misc. Pub. Mus. Zool. Univ Mich. 54

respect to local geography and ecology than have the birds. Tree crickets should be audible to nearly everyone—at least in cool weather when the pitch, which changes like the cadence, is no longer so high and insect-like.

It is in September and October, when lower temperatures seem to take the place of darkness in stimulating an individual here and there to strike up for a few minutes—even at midday, and almost always in the late afternoon—that these relatively low-pitched chirps are so pleasantly musical. Then one associates the sound with the memorable experiences of fall: a trip made successful by the fortuitous appearance of a concentration of egrets or shorebirds; the satisfaction of the discovery that fall warblers can be identified after all; the new sharpness in the air in the woods during a hunt for mushrooms; the final climax of gentians or turtleheads or glorious composites in the golden sunshine under a clear sky etched with wisps of white cirrus. In the 50's the tegmina are rubbed together so slowly that one can even distinguish, though scarcely count, the individual teeth on the file of the right tegmen. (This quavering was suggested in the word description above by a few r's in each chirp.) No longer shrilly emphatic with untiring bacchanalian frenzy, the deliberate, contemplative chirps now impart a nostalgic sadness which augments the realization that the carefree summer season is near an end. At about 48 degrees the insect becomes stiffly silent, only to resume, barring frost, during each of the ever-shorter returns of warm weather, each like the "last" public concert of a retiring prima donna. Only during these last warm evenings does one appreciate how large and characteristic a part of summer this friendly background music was.

The Flight of the Nighthawk

Some late afternoon in late August or early September one may witness a unique migration. There is nothing spectacular to catch the eye; in fact, the birds, in contrast to their behavior over the city on mid-summer evenings, are strangely silent and so usually escape notice. But if one has the patience to watch a nighthawk flap and zig-zag its erratic way until at last it has nearly disappeared in the hazy south, there will be another nighthawk overhead to take its place. Presently a third mysteriously comes into view, and one begins to realize that, in this leisurely replacement of birds, they are all moving in the same direction. Sometimes they will even be struggling against a south wind. Though the flight may seem slow and the birds widely spaced, a count will reveal that even directly overhead they pass at the rate of several per minute. And in open country one can see still other birds farther east and west. In fact, the whole sky is decorated with a vast expanse of figured wallpaper, featuring a repeat design of nighthawks, which is drifting inexorably to the south. Sometimes, when the birds continue to fly in this fashion for hours, one can begin to appreciate the surprising vastness of the population of this fairly large bird. Has the ever-growing supply of flat gravel rooftops, attractive and safe for nesting, so favored this species that these flights are only a recent phenomenon? If the recollections and writings of "old timers" fail to establish the existence of such

large migrations in the last century, then perhaps we can take some comfort in the fact that, in small measure, man has replaced the awesome flights of passenger pigeons with at least one other event worthy of wonder and speculation.

A few persons have reported these nighthawk flights each year to the W. S. O. field notes editor. Now it would be of interest to find out just how many members have actually seen these flights and in how many parts of Wisconsin. Do the birds accumulate in the central counties and then migrate en masse across only the southern counties; or do these flights occur even farther north and east? These and other questions can be answered easily if everyone will report his 1954 observations of nighthawk flights to Mr. Besadny. And if flights were seen but not reported in other years, we should appreciate notes on at least the location, if not also the date and numbers, for these also. A study of these reports would be worthwhile, now that W. S. O. has such a splendid number of cooperating field observers. And it could lead to the elucidation of other questions, such as: How far does one of these mass migrations go before stopping? Do they last all night or occur in afternoon and evening only? Does the "flock" become still bigger, or does it disband each day? And why do a few late nighthawks always come through a whole month after the "big" day or two in the fall migration of this species?

Nighthawks comprise only one of the many interesting aspects of the fall migration period; each species behaves in a unique way and writes its own story. This fall several other birds are also under study in the continent-wide migration program, which is to be continued for several years, now that a sizeable network of cooperators, for the first time in history, is beginning to take shape from Canada to the Gulf. The following form is being sent to those who supplied spring arrival dates in 1954 (see Passenger Pigeon, XVI:1: 20-22 and Audubon Magazine, 56:3: 130-133, for more information about this project):

COOPERATIVE STUDY OF FALL MIGRATION

We hereby acknowledge and thank you for your reports on spring-migrants in 1954. When they have all been entered on IBM punch cards, a copy of the tabulation will be sent to you to check errors or omissions. We greatly appreciate your continued cooperation which has enabled this project to grow and show more and more promise.

There has been such a fine response to the request for spring migration dates for selected species that the study has been extended to include the fall migration period as well. Since few species sing during their southward movement and since fewer observers are afield in fall than spring, fall migration data are comparatively hard to obtain in large quantity. Therefore, we are especially anxious to obtain reports from all active field observers, bird banders and feeding station operators, even if they can furnish information for just two or three species.

Many of the birds in the spring migration list are so dull-colored, silent or retiring in fall that they have been omitted from the fall study. In their place are seven additional species. The present list contains both nocturnal and diurnal migrants, early and late ones, solitary and flocking species, each one included for a specific purpose. In some cases the data will be used by research workers who are studying the movements of a particular species; in other cases they will be used to correlate bird migration with weather conditions.

It is not necessary to fill in all the information requested for a given species. A single first date or peak date or last date will be useful even if numbers observed and other dates are not available. A date when numbers of a species suddenly increase or decrease will also be helpful. As in spring, the more observers reporting from each locality, the better.

The species to be studied include: Canada goose, mallard, broad-winged hawk, Wilson's snipe, mourning dove, nighthawk, chimney swift, crested flycatcher, catbird, hermit thrush, golden-crowned kinglet, myrtle warbler, Baltimore oriole, rose-breasted grosbeak, evening grosbeak, junco, tree sparrow, white-crowned sparrow, white-throated sparrow, and fox sparrow.

The desired data include: date of first migrant, and number of birds on that date; dates of first, second and third peaks—if any—and numbers observed on each date; date of last migrants, and number of birds on that date.

Please send in this fall 1954 report, either to Mr. Besadny with your fall W. S. O. field notes, or to Mr. Chandler S. Robbins, Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel, Maryland.

—John V. Dennis, Gilbert S. Raynor, Chandler S. Robbins, James H. Zimmerman

White-Throated Sparrow Data

The slow but steady growth of the study in Wisconsin is indicated by the following tabulation of spring reports on just the white-throated sparrow. In 1951, 30 localities were heard from. In 1952, 37 persons reported arrival dates from 33 localities. And the first dates of white-throats for 1953 received to date by Mr. Robbins, plus those reported in field notes to Mr. Besadny, now total 56 and represent 35 Wisconsin localities. Still others reported on some of the other birds in the study. Congratulations and thanks to all who have gone to the trouble to report their observations! If there is anyone who has not yet turned in a 1953 report, now is the last call, for it is time to start compiling the information received for that year.

There are, of course, still many large areas in our state which have not been heard from—the western half of Wisconsin and the northeast edge are still poorly represented, so that what the birds do there is still a big question mark. And 56 reports from 35 places means an average of less than a birder and a half in each of these places, even though there are actually hundreds of them in our twenty largest cities even when we exclude the large bird clubs in Madison, Green Bay and Milwaukee. Perhaps it has not been stressed enough that this study, unlike most, depends for its success on amateurs—not some, but all, who can recognize birds. There just aren't enough professional ornithologists to go around. One report from a city or county isn't enough, even if it happens to be a very fine, complete and detailed report from a serious bird student who is afield nearly every day. So we hope there will be even more reports for spring and fall in 1954; no matter how incomplete they are, each person's own notes on any of the species on the spring and fall lists will contribute to our knowledge of this fascinating thing called migration.

2114 Van Hise Avenue
Madison 5, Wisconsin



RECIPE FOR ROUNDELAY

By GERTRUDE M. SCOTT

Almost everyone likes to feed the birds in winter, from the person who puts out bread for the sparrows and blue jays to the lady who used her fur coat money to buy sunflower seed. Giving food when the need is great satisfies the humanitarian impulse. Not all of us carry this over into the other seasons, where the return is even sweeter. Natural food supplied by proper plantings can enhance the appearance of your home grounds, and coax the birds too.

Let's assume you're landscaping around your new home, or adding a few plants to those you already have. On the longest "fence line" plant a mixed dozen of ninebark, wayfaring tree, red-osier dogwood and high-bush cranberry. This brings juncos and tree sparrows—and evening grosbeaks—in winter, and will make a flock of cedar waxwings detour your way in spring to feast on still-hanging cranberries.

Mix in a few ordinary sumac, wild blackcaps, and juneberries (shadbush gives extra premium of airy flowers in early spring). Robins and thrashers will be thrilled into song over the fruits, with catbirds and rose-breasted grosbeaks stealing a few too.

If there's a little extra space, have a *Lonicera* (honeysuckle) bush with a wild grape or bittersweet rambling 'round. Many birds seem to feel that elderberries are a real treat. (So do we, when they're made into pie or jelly; and have you ever eaten juneberry turnover?) Try a hearts-abustin' (wahoo) bush with a cork-barked euonymus—it's full or perches and the birds seem to find something to eat as well.

Mountain ash and Russian mulberry trees are relatively small but they pay real dividends in bird callers. Robins flock to the mountain ash with the waxwings, while the list of birds visiting the fruiting mulberry will include practically every bird that ever ate a berry. If there's space for a wild cherry, the black ones ripen when mulberries are gone. An old apple tree should be preserved; apples unfit to pick, left to freeze on the branches, are mighty tempting to early spring migrants.

Have columbines for the hummingbirds even if you can't find place for a trumpet vine; orioles like that trumpet nectar too, you know. Bush roses give two-season enjoyment—when they flower and when the little seed-eating birds chatter happily among the weeds beneath them in winter.

Chard is a wonderful drawing card for goldfinches, and they seem to find quite a bit to visit about in corn tassels. If your vegetable garden boasts a few blossoming sunflower stalks, you'll be surprised how early the birds know just who they're for. A clean garden is something to crow about, but you'll hear more song if you happen to have a few weeds such as vetch, foxtail and other grasses in some out-of-the-way corner. Juncos find lush pickings under big wild aster plants and goldenrod heads bring goldfinches in winter.

Evergreen are the ideal winter protection but thickets of small trees and bushes are useful too. A clump of wild plum and hawthorn soon becomes impenetrable and the fruit appeals to chipmunks and white-

footed deer mice. In such a development Nature herself will be apt to help you by sowing a few seeds of the type of plants best liked by birds. Eventually good nesting sites will develop both there and in the evergreens and you'll have a year-long roundelay.

P. S. Don't forget water! Either a pedestal bath or a pool on the ground will have plenty of use. If it's a pool, you'll be gratified at the help you have in excavating—mud-daubers and robins need such quantities of mud for nest building!

1721 Hickory Drive
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THE STUDENT PAGE

Arctic Visitors . . .

By WILLIAM N. ROARK

On the afternoon of January 3, 1954, I took time out from my studying to go birding for what I thought would be less than an hour.

As I was entering Picnic Point I met Andy Ragatz just leaving. If I had been a minute later I probably would have missed a thrilling experience, for Andy said there was a snowy owl out on the lake, a little way from the south bank of the Point near an open spot in the ice. I have seldom used my bicycle as I did then!

I knew just where the owl was supposed to be, and I worried for fear he wouldn't be there when I saw some skaters in the vicinity. Looking through my binoculars, however, I spotted the owl. I went on, stopping finally at a place on the bank very close to the tip of the Point. There I had a marvelous view of the big, white, slightly barred bird as he sat on the ice. After a few minutes he flew up and alighted again much closer to me. I made various noises to induce him to turn and face me, but he only glared at me for a moment with his big, beautiful—but wild—yellow eyes. He was interested in other things. He flew again, alighting this time on the far side of the open water, where some canvasbacks and a pair of coots were swimming.

Then some skaters approached, scaring the ducks into flight, and immediately the owl was up and in pursuit! Only then did it dawn on me why the owl was so fond of this spot. I wouldn't have thought a snowy owl would be interested in waterfowl, but no doubt this was a hungry bird. The owl bore down on the smaller birds, wavered a moment, then singled out one of the slower coots, who immediately dropped down to the ice for safety, running a little way with awkwardly flapping wings before stopping. While on the ice, the coot, walking slowly in the direction of the open water, seemed unconcerned except when the owl swooped at him from above—which he did many times and at fairly even intervals for perhaps fifteen minutes. I suspect the owl was trying to

force the smaller bird to fly, which the latter wisely refused to do. I saw nothing to indicate that the owl was attempting to pick the coot off the ice, though at the lowest point of each swoop the coot did scramble wildly for a moment.

I was about to leave when suddenly the owl gave up his efforts and flew swiftly north-east. I saw ducks coming around the point and again the owl tried to take advantage of birds in flight. The swift ducks easily evaded him. I lost sight of everything for a moment behind bushes and trees, and when next I saw the owl he was on the ice not far from a second coot, and both were very close to the shore. The coot was resting directly on the ice, the owl only a few feet away from him. They sat there for what seemed an interminable time, the coot apparently not too worried. Finally the owl arose and swooped meaningfully at the coot. There was much fluttering from the latter, and I thought perhaps they had connected for an instant. The owl lit again, more excited now. I was too!

The little coot seemed rather shocked for a moment, and I thought, because of the strange position he took, that he might be injured. Certainly he was "crazy as a coot," for he started to walk, slowly but determinedly, his back hunched up and his neck stretched down, toward the owl! The owl became noticeably more nervous. Closer and closer the coot came. I expected to see the owl's claws strike out, but when the birds were almost touching it was the valiant little mudhen who struck savagely upward at the owl. The big bird fluttered hurriedly up and back, coming down again at a respectful distance from his attacker. The coot settled down to preening himself.

But it wasn't long before the owl got up again and flew strongly and swiftly to the north. Suddenly he reversed direction. I wondered why, but kept my glasses on him, and then across my field of vision a **second** owl joined the first. I watched the pair as they flew down the bay, finally disappearing against the light western sky. Then I scanned the north side of the lake, where I found a large flock of ducks almost even with the tip of the Point, and beyond these, a large white bird so far out on the ice that I couldn't be sure of its identity. But when it rose and flew swiftly down upon the ducks, I was sure of this as a third snowy owl.

At this moment, Andy's neighbors, the L. Wayne Browns, came along. I pointed out the third owl, and shortly after that one of the other owls returned to the open water on the north side. Since he was closer, our attention shifted to him. Number three stayed in view for a few minutes and then disappeared. The owl that had returned gave us a treat by flying almost directly over our heads and above level with the tops of the trees just as I was leaving. As he went over, filling my field of vision, he turned his head, and again I was looking into those wild, staring eyes. This moment was one of the supreme moments in all my years of birding. He circled, coming back over the grove of trees, stopped a moment on one of them, and then flew, turning back toward us and again passing directly overhead. This time he settled on the ice directly off the tip of the Point. As I was leaving for the nth time, he got up again and lit for an instant in a tree not forty feet away, with his wings half spread, his body alone filling my field of vision. He gave us a last

glance over his shoulder, a splendid symbol of things "natural, wild and free," and then returned to the ice.

Then I did leave, for I was cold, hungry, and very late, though no doubt all three owls would have come over and chatted if I had stayed a little longer. But I left feeling very grateful, for I had had a marvelous afternoon.

101 Roby Road
Madison 5, Wisconsin

MORE NEWS . . .

About fifty persons journeyed to Plainfield to watch the booming prairie chicken on April 24 and 25. Rain and hail slowed down somewhat the activity of the birds, but it did not dampen the hospitality of the Fred Hamerstroms, or the enthusiasm of the observers.

Beginning with the next issue, the "Dates To Remember" column will be greatly enlarged. In addition to listing W. S. O. dates, the column will include

dates of meetings and field trips of local clubs around the state, Audubon Screen Tours dates in various Wisconsin cities, convention dates for the national ornithological societies, etc. Announcements for the next issue should be in the editor's hands by October 1. Details should include: date, time and place of meeting; speaker and subject; name of field trip leader. We hope that each club will plan its program far in advance, and send advance notices to **The Passenger Pigeon** regularly.

BOOK REVIEW*

The Lives of Wild Birds. By Aretas A. Saunders. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 256 pp. \$3.50. 1954.

The author of this new publication is not a newcomer to those acquainted with ornithological literature. He will be remembered for **A Guide to Bird Songs and Bird Song**. Mr. Saunders is a graduate of Yale University and did graduate work in the School of Forestry at Yale. He served with the U. S. Forest Service for several years. Since then he has devoted most of his time to writing and teaching.

After an introduction, the chapters are as follows: The Identification of Birds in the Field, Keeping Notes and Records, Watching the Migration, The Nesting Cycle, Finding and Studying Birds' Nests, Studying Bird Behavior, Feathers, Plumages and Colors, The Study of Songs and Calls, The Food of Birds, Ecology, and The Problems of Conservation.

One excellent feature is that the bibliography is divided into the subjects treated in the various chapters. There is a list of all the species of birds discussed with their scientific names. The index is very good.

Mr. Saunders has written a delightfully interesting book that outlines what the student can do to contribute to learning more about our native birds. After reading this book the bird watcher should have no trouble in knowing what to look for when in the field. The author gives detailed information on the nesting cycle, courtship, egg laying, incubation and care of the young for different types of birds. His treatment of the many problems that confront conservationists is very well done and expertly handled. Dominick D'Ostilio's line drawings are a pleasing addition to this volume.—F. R. Zimmerman.

*All books available from the W. S. O. Supply Department.

By The Wayside . . .

Edited by C. D. BESADNY

Tree Swallows Have Their Fun. Before daylight on October 9, 1953, I was sitting in a duckblind on East Channel Point in Lake Poygan. The Point is the end of a narrow rush island nearly a mile long and about a mile or a mile and a half from shore. It is the roosting place of thousands upon thousands of red-wing, rusty, and Brewer's blackbirds. As daylight came I began to see tree swallows and soon realized they were more numerous than the blackbirds. There were thousands of them resting on the rushes. As it grew lighter they began to fly slowly about, drinking from the surface of the calm lake. They were fat as butter and very playful. On a number of occasions I saw a swallow stoop to the water, pick up a duck feather, carry it up into the air, drop it, and then catch it. Soon a crowd of swallows would gather about the player, each trying to snatch the feather. The birds did not go to the mainland until about 10 o'clock in the morning. Although I have been in the rushes often at this time of year, I have never seen the swallows in such quantities, but the veteran guide I was with said it was not uncommon and that they would not leave until ice formed some cold night around the base of the rushes.—Alfred S. Bradford, Appleton.

An American Bittern Winters in Winnebago County. On January 8, 1954, as I was driving along a road near Spring Brook, Town of Omro, Winnebago County, an American bittern was seen crossing the road directly in front of our car. Stopping the car, I walked back to get a better look at him as it seemed very unusual to find a bittern in Wisconsin so late in winter. He seemed in very good condition. His plumage looked sleek and he went into the usual position a bittern takes when it doesn't want to be noticed. Most of the marsh land on both sides of the road was frozen, but a few springs remained open where the bittern could get food. There was very little snow on the ground.—Mrs. Eunice V. Fisher, Oshkosh.

Cardinals Prove They Pay Their Rent. Late in July 1953, a pair of cardinals chose to build their nest in a lilac bush outside the dining room window at the home of Dr. and Mrs. E. L. Bolton in the residential district on College Avenue in Appleton.

During the incubation period the family discovered the nest. After the twelve days, the young hatched and the parents were kept busy feeding them, which furnished no end of interest and entertainment for the watchers.

On August 11 great excitement prevailed in the lilac bush; the old birds flew about while the little ones tried their wings amid constant chattering. After about two days spent around the home site, the two young were taken around the neighborhood to visit the feeding trays loaded with sunflower seeds. Calls came from bird lovers in the block: "You should see my baby cardinals with their parents." Some time later another friend who lived several blocks away told me that a family of

four cardinals, two young and parents, had taken up residence at her feeder.

Back in the lilac bush, the Boltons found the nest intact and wondered what materials were used in the construction of such a home. One member of the family decided to investigate and from a stepladder reached the loosely built nest of twigs, weeds and grasses. In the bottom securely fastened, he found an old receipted bill!—Mrs. Walter E. Rogers, Appleton.

A Heated English Sparrow Roost. On December 19, 1953, I saw a most unusual English sparrow roost at the W. L. Bacten residence in West DePere. It was a large ball-shaped nest, constructed mostly of dried grass and had a single hole for an entrance. It was built partly on top of a morning glory arbor support and also lodged against the electric meter at the back of the Bacten home. The sparrows really knew what they were doing when they selected their location as some heat is given off by the coils in the meter. Mr. Bacten told me that every evening he has seen 5 or 6 English sparrows entering the hole in the nest to roost for the night.—Edwin Cleary, Green Bay.

A Handicapped Woodpecker. Many interesting birds appear at my suet feeders every winter, but in January a most unusual bird was seen. It was a one-legged downy woodpecker. This bird was quite wary and would only take a few mouthfuls at one time. Each time it came back to the onion sack feeder, it would take the same position; clinging firmly to the sack with one leg. The onion sack proved to be a big help to the bird.—Mrs. Alice Weber, Green Bay.

W. S. O. SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

The Birds of Britain and Western Europe, by Roger Tory Peterson, et al.\$5.00
Guide to Rocks and Minerals, Peterson series\$3.75
Nature Notebook, by Candy, for young people\$3.00
Songbirds in Your Garden, by Terres, how to attract them\$3.95
King Solomon's Ring, by Lorenz\$3.50
An Album of Southern Birds (Photos by Grimes), by Sprunt\$8.75
Those of the Forest, by Grange\$4.75
Guide to Trees and Shrubs, by Graves \$4.00

RECORDS

Soundbook, Songbirds of America, record and book of birds in color plus write-ups of each, 33 1/3 or 45 r.p.m.\$4.95
Long Play Cornell Record, Volume II \$7.75
The Mockingbird Sings, new 78 r.p.m., birds from Florida and New England\$2.50

Records I and II by the Stillwells, long play, each\$7.95
Nature Wheel with bird song record, for children\$2.00

OTHER ITEMS

Place Mats, sets of 4, choice of wood duck, wild rose, arbutus, or audubon\$1.00
Score Pad Sets, 4 pads to the set, illustrated with birds in color, either bridge or canasta\$1.00
Memo Pads, 12 pads to the set, illustrated with birds in color\$1.00
Party Match Boxes, 25 match books to the box, illustrated with birds\$1.00
Gift Enclosure Boxes, 36 enclosures and 36 envelopes to the box, illustrated with natural history subjects\$1.00
Sky-lite Window Bird Feeder, hinged roof of glass\$5.40
Lantern Feeder, of glass, for seed\$3.60
Eye-safe Suet Feeder, for hanging\$3.75

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FIELD NOTES

THE WINTER SEASON

November 1953-January 1954

By C. D. BESADNY

It was a most unusual winter. Temperatures were 3 to 6 degrees above normal during November and December, and precipitation was well below normal. This weather was a continuation of the warm, dry spell which started in August. The weather was unseasonably warm November 13-20 with daily temperatures above 60 degrees quite frequently during this period. Mild weather prevailed during the first two weeks of December and again around the end of the month. It was 55 degrees on December 4. January temperatures were about normal and precipitation again was very light. Cold snaps during this period were very brief.

The ground was relatively free of snow in most parts of the state with only a good snow cover existing in the northern part of Wisconsin. No severe snowstorms were recorded for this period.

The mild weather brought a large number of observers into the field and also accounted for the record-breaking list obtained on the Christmas bird count. Many people commented on the fact that they didn't have to wear any heavy clothing or overshoes during most of their trips this winter.

Southern birds remaining in the state had a fairly easy time because of the lack of snow. Quite a few water areas remained open and water-birds were found well into the winter. It was a good year for our northern birds although few crossbills, pine grosbeaks and siskins were seen. Northern shrikes were reported by a large number of observers, and snowy owls were recorded throughout the winter season. A very large number of winter wrens was seen, but an outstanding find was the Carolina wren—in Adams, Dane, and Sauk counties.

Many species of sparrows were found wintering in Wisconsin. The Harris's sparrow reported for Green and Manitowoc counties represents another phenomenal find for the season.

An asterisk after the notes on a species indicates that the bird also appeared on one or more lists for the 1953 Christmas bird count. The reader may refer to the summary of this count in the previous issue of **The Passenger Pigeon** for a more detailed account.

RED-THROATED LOON: Milwaukee, Nov. 10 and 30 (Mary Donald—Mrs. A. P. Balsom); at Cedar Grove, Nov. 28 (Tom Soulen).*

HORNED GREBE: See the 1953 Christmas bird count summary.

EARED GREBE: Lake Mendota, Madison, Nov. 1 (Peter Weber—Charlie Sontag—Tom Soulen); in same area, Dec. 19 (Mrs. R. A. Walker)—latest date on record.

WESTERN GREBE: At Cedar Grove between Nov. 8 and 15 (Tom Soulen—The Carl Fristers); Milwaukee, Nov. 11 (Mary Donald)—very late.

PIED-BILLED GREBE: In the Waukesha area, Jan. 9 (S. Paul Jones—The L. E. Comptons).*

DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT: Lingered in Brown County until Dec. 1 (Edwin Cleary).

GREAT BLUE HERON: Rock County, Dec. 27 (The Harold Liebherrs); Adams County, Jan. 1 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); Milwaukee, Jan. 8 (Mary Donald).*

BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON: Rock County, Dec. 14 (John Wilde); Milwaukee between Jan. 24 and 29 (The Carl Fristers—Mary Donald—Mrs. A. P. Balsom)—very late dates.

AMERICAN BITTERN: A late straggler in the Oshkosh area, Jan. 8 (Mrs. Glen Fisher).* See "By the Wayside."

CANADA GOOSE: About 10,000 wintered on the Rock Prairie in Walworth County (many observers).*

GADWALL: Wintering in the Milwaukee area (Mary Donald—Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

BALDPATE: Milwaukee, Dec. 6 (The Carl Fristers).*

PINTAIL: In the Milwaukee area, Jan. 16-19 (The Carl Fristers—Mrs. A. P. Balsom); Dane County, Jan. 24 (Mrs. R. A. Walker).*

GREEN-WINGED TEAL: Chippewa Falls, Dec. 2 (C. A. Kemper); Milwaukee, Jan. 19 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

BLUE-WINGED TEAL: Brown County, Dec. 27 (Edwin Cleary).

SHOVELLER: Milwaukee, Jan. 19 and 31 (The Carl Fristers—Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

WOOD DUCK: Rock County, Dec. 29 (The Harold Liebherrs); Milwaukee, Jan. 5 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

CANVAS-BACK: In the Milwaukee area, Jan. 16-19 (The Carl Fristers—Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

WHITE-WINGED SCOTER: Kenosha, Dec. 25 (Mrs. Howard Higgins); Milwaukee, Dec. 27 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

AMERICAN SCOTER: Six observed at Cedar Grove, Nov. 1 (Gordon Orians), and three were still present on Nov. 8 (Fred Alyea—Peter Weber—Tom Soulen).

HOODED MERGANSER: Departed from Brown County, Dec. 12 (Ed Paulson); seen in Milwaukee, Jan. 24 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

GOSHAWK: Seen in Brown County between Dec. 31 and Jan. 26 (Edwin Cleary); Chippewa County, Dec. 6 (C. A. Kemper); two in Wood County, Dec. 31 (Sam Robbins).*

SHARP-SHINNED HAWK: Fond du Lac County, Dec. 1 (Rev. George Henseler); Dunn County, Dec. 2 (H. E. Clark); Adams County, Jan. 1 (Sam Robbins).*

COOPER'S HAWK: Wintering birds in Chippewa, Dane, Milwaukee, Rock, and Waukesha Counties.*

GOLDEN EAGLE: Tower Hill State Park, Iowa County, Dec. 12 (Jack Kaspar—Gordon Orians—Tom Soulen).

BALD EAGLE: Waupaca County, Nov. 3 (Florence Peterson); Chippewa County, Dec. 12 (C. A. Kemper); three immatures seen the same day in Sauk County (Tom Soulen); 16 in Adams County, Jan. 1 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins).*

MARSH HAWK: Sawyer County, Nov. 3 (Karl Kahmann); Manitowoc County, Nov. 5 (Myron Reichwaldt); Vernon County, Nov. 6 (Margarette Morse); Rock County, Dec. 25 (John Wilde); Outagamie County, Dec. 26 (Al Bradford); Jefferson County, Jan. 15 (Mrs. H. W. Degner); Dane County, Jan. 24 (Mrs. R. A. Walker).*

OSPREY: Dane County, Nov. 10 (Mrs. R. A. Walker).

DUCK HAWK: See the 1953 Christmas bird count summary.

PIGEON HAWK: Dane County, Dec. 16 (Mrs. R. A. Walker); Waukesha County, Jan. 1 (The L. E. Comptons).

SPARROW HAWK: Waukesha County, Dec. 16 (Emma Hoffmann); Brown County, Dec. 12 (Ed Paulson); Winnebago County, Jan. 1 (Stanley Wellso); and same day in Jefferson County (Mrs. H. W. Degner); Appleton, Jan. 11 (Mrs. W. E. Rogers); two in Kenosha, Jan. 23 (Mrs. Howard Higgins); Dane County, Jan. 24 (Mrs. R. A. Walker).*

SPRUCE GROUSE: A male seen in Sawyer County, Nov. 8 (Karl Kahmann).

SANDHILL CRANE: Trempealeau County, Nov. 2 (R. Dryer).

KILLDEER: Last for the Milwaukee area, Nov. 23 (The Carl Strelitzers); many seen in the Appleton area, Jan. 1 (Mrs. W. E. Rogers).*

GOLDEN PLOVER: Departed from Brown County, Nov. 2 (Ed Paulson).

BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER: At Cedar Grove, Nov. 8 (Tom Soulen); last for Adams County, Nov. 19 (Sam Robbins).

WILSON SNIPE: Milwaukee, Jan. 8 and 19 (Mary Donald—Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

SPOTTED SANDPIPER: Bayfield County, Nov. 1 (Mrs. A. Axley); Lafayette County, Nov. 6-8 (Lola Welch—Ethel Olson).

SOLITARY SANDPIPER: Lingered in Lafayette County until Nov. 16 (Lola Welch—Ethel Olson).

GREATER YELLOW-LEGS: Last seen in Adams County, Nov. 19 (Sam Robbins).

PECTORAL SANDPIPER: Late migrants in Vernon County, Nov. 14 (Margarette Morse); last for Adams County, Nov. 19 (Sam Robbins).

DOWITCHER: A straggler in Brown County, Nov. 7 (Ed Paulson).

SANDERLING: Cedar Grove, Nov. 1 (Gordon Orians); in Milwaukee Nov. 1-15 (The Carl Fristers—Mrs. A. P. Balsom—Karl Priebe).

JAEGER: Seen in the Milwaukee area on Nov. 4 and again on the 28th (Mary Donald).

GLAUCOUS GULL: Milwaukee, Jan. 24 and 29 (The Carl Fristers—Mrs. A. P. Balsom).

BLACK-BACKED GULL: See the 1953 Christmas bird count summary.

FRANKLIN'S GULL: One seen at Cedar Grove, Nov. 1 (Gordon Orians).

BONAPARTE'S GULL: Milwaukee, Jan. 19 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom); Kenosha, Jan. 23 (Mrs. Howard Higgins).*

COMMON TERN: Brown County, Nov. 28 (Ed Paulson)—latest date on record.

CASPIAN TERN: Brown County, Nov. 28 (Ed Paulson)—latest date on record.

MOURNING DOVE: Seen through the season in Adams, Brown, Chippewa, Columbia, Dane, Dunn, Green, Iowa, Kenosha, Lafayette, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Rock, Sawyer, Waukesha, Waupaca, and Winnebago Counties.*

SNOWY OWL: This irregular visitor to the state was seen on the following occasions: Rock County, Dec. 10 (Les Neustadter); Madison, Dec. 14 (Norbert DeByle); Marinette County, Dec. 28 (Frank King); Manitowoc County, Dec. 29 (James B. Hale); Milwaukee, Dec. 31 (Mary Donald); Adams County, Jan. 1 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); again in Dane County, Jan. 1-10 (many observers); Eau Claire County, Jan. 10 (C. A. Kemper); Brown County, Jan. 15 (Edwin Cleary); Chippewa County, Jan. 21 (C. A. Kemper); Iron County, Jan. 26 and 28 (Mrs. Herbert Sell); Winnebago County, Jan. 29 (Stanley Wellso).*

SAW-WHET OWL: An injured bird was found in Manitowoc County, Nov. 11—it died in a few days (John Kraupa).

KINGFISHER: Wintered in Rock (John Wilde) and Waukesha (The L. E. Comptons—Tom Soulen) Counties.*

FLICKER: Wintered in Waukesha County (Tom Soulen); seen in Lafayette County, Jan. 1 (Lola Welch—Ethel Olson); Dane County, Jan. 2 (Mrs. R. A. Walker); Adams County, Jan. 4 (Sam Robbins); Rock County, Jan. 24 (The Harold Liebherers).*

RED-HEADED WOODPECKER: Seen throughout the winter in Dunn County (H. E. Clark).*

YELLOW-BELLIED SAPSUCKER: Dane County, Jan. 4 (Mrs. R. A. Walker).

CANADA JAY: Brown County, Nov. 7 (Ed Paulson); Wood County, Nov. 23 (Fred Benson).*

BLUE JAY: 41 in Waukesha County, Dec. 31 (Emma Hoffmann).*

TUFTED TITMOUSE: Dunn County, Dec. 10 (H. E. Clark); Rock County, Jan. 1 (John Wilde); Waukesha County, Jan. 2 (Tom Soulen); Chippewa County, Jan. 23 (C. A. Kemper).*

RED-BREASTED NUTHATCH: Fond du Lac County, Nov. 15 (Rev. George Henseler); Lafayette County, Dec. 6 (Lola Welch—Ethel Olson); Bayfield County, Dec. 7 (Mrs. A. Axley); seen throughout the period in Outagamie (Mrs. W. E. Rogers) and Vernon (Margarette Morse) Counties.*

WINTER WREN: On Nov. 15 in Dane (Mrs. R. A. Walker) and Vernon (Margarette Morse) Counties; again in Dane County, Dec. 25 (Sam Robbins); Brown County, Dec. 27 (Ed Paulson—Edwin Cleary); Crawford County, Dec. 28 (George Knudsen); Rock County, Jan. 24 (The Harold Liebherers).*

CAROLINA WREN: A straggler in Sauk County, Dec. 24 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); Adams County, Dec. 28 and Jan. 4 (Sam Robbins); Dane County, Jan. 22 (Mrs. R. A. Walker).*

PRAIRIE MARSH WREN: Many still present at Horicon Marsh, Nov. 20 (Frank King).

CATBIRD: Departed from the Fond du Lac area, Dec. 20 (Rev. George Henseler).

BROWN THRASHER: One at the bird feeder—Waukesha, Dec. 1 (The L. E. Comptons).

ROBIN: Seen through the winter season in many parts of the state—as far north as Bayfield County, Dec. 1 (David Bratley) and Douglas County, Dec. 15 (Mrs. C. Gates).*

HERMIT THRUSH: Waukesha County, Dec. 5 (The Charles Nelsons).

OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH: Seen in Milwaukee, Dec. 5 (The Carl Fristers—latest departure on record).

BLUEBIRD: A singing male in Manitowoc County, Dec. 10 (Myron Reichwaldt); Dane County, Jan. 23 (Mrs. R. A. Walker)—latest date on record.*

RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET: Lafayette County, Dec. 16 (Lola Welch—Ethel Olson); Waukesha, Dec. 17 (The L. E. Comptons); La-Crosse County, Jan. 2 (Alvin Peterson—Harold Schick).*

BOHEMIAN WAXWING: Three were seen at Balsom Lake, Polk County, Nov. 9 (Mrs. A. M. Hermstad); two seen in Adams County, Dec. 28 and Jan. 4 (Sam Robbins); 7 in Chippewa County, Jan. 30 (C. A. Kemper); four seen in Superior during January (Mrs. C. Gates).*

CEDAR WAXWING: Noted on Dec. 26 in Chippewa County (C. A. Kemper) and Outagamie County (Al Bradford); Rock County, Jan. 1 and 24 (Melva Maxson—The Harold Liebherers); Fond du Lac County, Jan. 6 (Rev. George Henseler); Milwaukee, Jan. 19 (Mrs. A. P. Balsom).*

NORTHERN SHRIKE: Seen through the winter period in Adams, Bayfield, Brown, Chippewa, Dunn, Fond du Lac, Kenosha, Manitowoc, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Waukesha, and Wood Counties.*

MYRTLE WARBLER: Rock County, Dec. 28 (Melva Maxson)—late date.

WESTERN MEADOWLARK: Dane County, Jan. 23 (Mrs. R. A. Walker); Chippewa County, Jan. 27 (C. A. Kemper).*

RUSTY BLACKBIRD: Iowa County, Dec. 24 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); Adams County, Jan. 1 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); Waukesha, Jan. 2-7 (Tom Soulen—The L. E. Comptons); Fond du Lac, Jan. 10 (Rev. George Henseler).*

BRONZED GRACKLE: Bayfield County, Dec. 21 (David Bratley); 8 in Winnebago County, Jan. 1 (Stanley Wellso); seen on Jan. 14 in Outagamie (Al Bradford) and Waukesha (The L. E. Comptons) Counties.*

COWBIRD: Seen on Nov. 30 at Horicon (Mary Donald) and in Milwaukee (Mrs. A. P. Balsom); Waukesha, Dec. 1-5 (The Charles Nelsons—The L. E. Comptons); Brown County, Dec. 6 (Edwin Cleary).

EVENING GROSBEAK: Seen in many localities during the winter months. Reported as being quite numerous in St. Croix Falls (W. D. Barnard).*

PURPLE FINCH: Scattered reports throughout the winter season.*

PINE GROSBEAK: Bayfield County, Nov. 8 (Mrs. A. Axley); small flock in Polk County—Balsom Lake, Nov. 13 (Mrs. A. M. Hermstad); Fond du Lac area, Nov. 15 and Dec. 6 (Rev. George Henseler); Chippewa County, Jan. 22-26 (C. A. Kemper); Sawyer County, Jan. 29 (Karl Kahmann).*

RED CROSSBILL: Milwaukee, Nov. 28 (Sontag—Weber—Alyea—Imhoff—Soulen); Shawano County, Jan. 23 (Al Bradford).

WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL: Marathon County, Dec. 30 (Rev. George Henseler).*

REDEYED TOWHEE: Brown County, Nov. 28 (Ed Paulson); Madison area, Dec. 31 to Jan. 4 (many observers).*

SAVANNAH SPARROW: See the 1953 Christmas bird count summary.

VESPER SPARROW: Mazomanie, Dec. 24 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); Waukesha, Jan. 29 (The Charles Nelsons)—unusual winter records.*

OREGON JUNCO: One at the feeder—Waukesha, Nov. 15 (The L. E. Comptons).*

CHIPPING SPARROW: Waupaca County, Nov. 25 (Florence Peterson).

FIELD SPARROW: Rock County, Dec. 27 (The Harold Liebheers); Dane County, Jan. 10 (Mrs. R. A. Walker)—rare in winter.*

HARRIS'S SPARROW: Green County, Dec. 31 (Howard Orians, et al.); Manitowoc County, Jan. 3 and 9 (John Kraupa)—latest dates on record.*

WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW: Oshkosh, Nov. 7 (Mrs. Glen Fisher); Milwaukee, Nov. 13 (Mary Donald) and Dec. 27 (The Carl Fristers); Dane County, from Nov. 22 on (Mrs. R. A. Walker—Tom Soulen).*

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW: Waukesha County, Dec. 6 (Emma Hoffmann); Fond du Lac County, Dec. 27 (Rev. George Henseler); Dane County, Jan. 2 (Mrs. R. A. Walker); Rock County, Jan. 7 (Melva Maxson).*

FOX SPARROW: Wintered in the Waukesha area (The L. E. Comptons).*

SWAMP SPARROW: Dane County, Dec. 25 (Sam Robbins) and seen again on Jan. 28 (N. R. Barger); Adams County, Jan. 1 (N. R. Barger—Sam Robbins); Waukesha County, Jan. 2 (Tom Soulen); seen throughout the winter period in Brown County (Edwin Cleary).*

SONG SPARROW: Wintered in Fond du Lac and Rock Counties with observations scattered through the winter season in Brown, Dane, Lafayette, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Vernon, and Waukesha Counties.*

LAPLAND LONGSPUR: Observed during the winter in Adams, Brown, Chippewa, Dane, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha, and Winnebago Counties.*

SNOW BUNTING: Seen in Adams, Bayfield, Brown, Chippewa, Dodge, Iowa, Milwaukee, Outagamie, Sawyer, Waukesha, Waupaca, and Winnebago Counties.*

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DATES TO REMEMBER

- September 26, 1954**—All-day field trip to Cedar Grove.
November 1-10, 1954—Field notes for August, September and October should be sent to the Associate Editor.
December 1, 1954—Send all departure dates for key species (see page 68) to Chandler S. Robbins.
December 24, 1954-January 2, 1955—Annual Christmas Bird Count.
January 8, 1955—W. S. O. Board of Directors meeting in Milwaukee.

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FIELD TRIP TO CEDAR GROVE

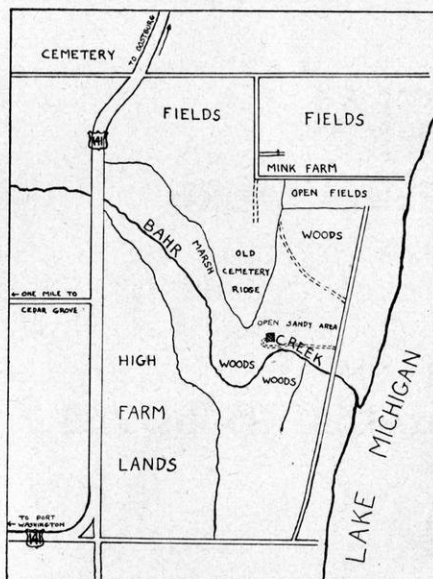
Again W. S. O. members and friends will gather at Cedar Grove on the last Sunday in September to watch the fall hawk migration. If the weather is favorable there could be a spectacular hawk flight. If wind conditions are unfavorable, there are still likely to be land birds and shore birds. In any event there will be a chance to learn something about the banding and other scientific work being carried on at Cedar Grove.

Date: Sunday, September 26.

Time: Come as early in the morning as you can; bring your lunch.

Place: Meet at Old Cemetery Ridge (see map). Follow signs in approaching the ridge either from the milk farm to the north or from the lake. The sharp corners of highway 141 (lower left corner of map) have recently been made more gradual; watch carefully for this turn.

Caution: Please keep clear of the hawk trapping station; a guided tour to the station will be taken during the day. Please do not disturb any of the passerine traps in the woods; one of the operators will explain the project.



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